GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:380
ANSWERED ON:19.12.2005
CROPS DESTROYED DUE TO SOIL EROSION
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has made any assessment about the quantity of precious nutrition food crops/foodgrains destroyed in the country due to soil erosion;

(b) if so, whether any assessment has been made regarding the financial loss suffered every year due to soil erosion;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the total area of land in hectare affected due to soil erosion alongwith the percentage of land damaged therefrom;

(e) the total area of land where soil conservation has been carried out to stop soil erosion;

(f) the names of the States most affected by soil erosion;

(g) whether any assessment has been made in this regard; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a) to (h): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (h) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 380 DUE FOR REPLY ON 19TH DECEMBER, 2005.

(a) to (h): Soil formation and erosion is a natural process occurring simultaneously to maintain equilibrium in the eco-system. Land denudation is more than natural formation. As per available estimates, the average rate of soil erosion in the country is 16.4 tonnes per hectare per year and over 5.3 billion tonnes of soil is lost every year through water erosion, resulting in a loss of around 8 million tonnes of plant nutrients annually. As per recent study conducted by the National Bureau of Soil Survey and Land Use Planning (NBSS&LUP), out of a total geographical area of 328.60 million ha., about 146.82 million ha. area (45%) is suffering from various kinds of land degradation as per break up given below:-

S.No.	Type of Land Degradation	Extent of Area in million ha.
1	Water erosion	93.68
2	Wind erosion	9.48
3	Water logging	14.30
4	Salinity/alkalinity	5.95
5	Soil acidity	16.03
6	Complex problem	7.38
	Total Degraded area	146.82

According to the studies conducted by the Central Soil and Water Conservation Research and Training Institute, Dehradun, it has been noticed that there is reduction in the yields of crops and income to the farmers due to loss of top soils. With a view to sustain farm productivity, Government of India has formulated various Schemes/Programmes on Watershed Development for control of soil erosion and land degradation in the country. These Programmes are

(i) National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA),

(ii) Soil Conservation for Enhancing Productivity of Degraded Lands in the Catchments of River Valley Project & Flood Prone River (RVP&FPR),

(iii) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas (WDPSCA),

(iv) Reclamation of Alkali Soil (RAS),

(v) Externally Aided Projects (EAPs) for development of degraded lands,

(vi) Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP),

(vii) Desert Development Programme (DDP),

(viii) Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (IWDP) and

(ix) National Afforestation & Eco − Development Project (NAEP). Under these programmes, upto March 2005, about 28.5 million ha. has been developed with expenditure of Rs.14577.00 crore.

The States, which have more than 50% of their geographical area affected by soil erosion/land degradation are Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and Uttranchal.